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Hongkong Daily Press.

ESTABLISHED 1857

Registered as a Newspaper at the General Post Office in the United Kingdom.

R. T. Barretto

Managing Director

N. LAZARUS

OPTICIANS

18, Queen's Road Central

No. 22728. 號捌拾貳佰柒仟貳萬式第、日肆拾月肆年未辛 HONG KONG, SATURDAY, MAY 30, 1931. 陸拜禮 日拾叁月伍年壹卅佰玖仟壹英 Price Single Copy, 10 cts. Per Month, \$3.

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EXCURSION TO MACAO:—

ON SUNDAY, THE 31st MAY, 1931
S.S. "SUI TAI"

Will depart from the Company's Wing Lok Street Wharf at 9 A.M., and from MACAO at 4.00 P.M.

NOTE.—All Steamboat Company's Steamers are fitted with Wireless.

DIARY OF LOCAL EVENTS.

To-day.
(May 30.)

Ember Day.
Decoration Day (U.S.A.)
Lawn Bowls:—First Division: Kowloon Docks v. Taikoo, Craigengower v. Civil Service, Kowloon; Bowling Green v. Police, Kowloon C.C. v. Recreation. Second Division: Recreation v. H.K. Electric, Taikoo Kowloon C.C. v. Civil Service, Kowloon Bowling Green, Yacht Club v. Craigengower.

Racing: Hong Kong Jockey Club closing of list of subscribers to Subscription Griffins and Australians, noon.

Queen's Theatre: "Trader Horn." World Theatre: "Trader Horn." Star Theatre: "Trader Horn." Central Theatre: "Framed." King's Theatre: "The Big Trail."

Mei Lan Fong at Ke Shing Theatre.

Dances: Tea Dance at H.K. Hotel; Dinner Dances at Peninsula Hotel and Repulse Bay Hotel. European Mail.—Inward: Europe via Suez (Yan Sang); Outward: Europe via Siberia (Pres. Taft) 5 p.m.

Sunday.

(May 31.)

Trinity Sunday.

Union Day, South Africa.
Golf: Kowloon Golf Club v. H.K. Volunteer Defence Corps (Machine Gun Co.).

Queen's Theatre: "Trader Horn." World Theatre: "Trader Horn." Star Theatre: "Trader Horn." Central Theatre: "Framed." King's Theatre: "The Big Trail."

Dances: Tea Dance at Repulse Bay Hotel.

Monday

(June 1.)

P.W.D. Sale of Crown Land, 3 p.m.

Queen's Theatre: "Trader Horn." World Theatre: "Sky Hawk." Star Theatre: "The Desert Song."

King's Theatre: "Just Imagine." Third Annual Dinner of Heriot Club, Hong Kong Hotel, 8 p.m.

Water Polo League competition begins.

Dances: Tea Dance, H.K. Hotel; Dinner Dances, Hong Kong and Peninsula Hotels and Hotel Cecil.

COLLECTING CHINESE PORCELAIN.

II.—SOME POINTS FOR THE CONNOISSEUR.

THE PREPONDERANCY OF FAKES.

It cannot be claimed that the Chinese were the inventors of the process of making utensils from clay, or that they discovered the use of the potter's wheel. Many other nations of antiquity have produced pottery, both useful and beautiful, which can rightly take its place among the artistic treasures of the world, e.g., the ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Etruscans, to mention no more. The distinction which the Chinese can claim, however, is the discovery of Porcelain as we readily acknowledge by the popular name "China" which we apply to the finer ceramic wares. The term "porcelain" is of Italian origin, and is said to be derived from the word *porcellana*, a cowrie shell, to which the translucent texture of porcelain seems to bear some resemblance.

When exactly porcelain was discovered is not known, but it is claimed that it was first made during the Han Dynasty (between B.C. 206 and A.D. 221) and that the celebrated factory of Ching-te-Chen was founded then. At present there is no porcelain which can be attributed with certainty to this period, though there is pottery which shows great excellence of workmanship and design.

The Composition and Quality of Porcelain.

We can now ask what is porcelain and what distinguishes it from pottery or stoneware. The necessary ingredients of the paste are the white clay or *kaolin*, which is the infusible element, and felspar or *petunse*, which is fusible at a high temperature and which gives the porcelain its translucency. In practice other materials may be added but these two are the essentials. The result, after the firing, is a white, translucent substance, not to be scratched, vitrified and emitting a musical note on being struck. When broken the paste is seen to be of fine grain. Vitrification and translucency are the chief characteristics of porcelain though the latter may not be noticeable in the thicker wares. The Chinese, however, accept as porcelain the grey and buff pastes produced during the Sung period. The glass is made of the same felspar as the body, only of finer quality, and mixed with lime. The finest porcelain was made at the Imperial factory at Ching-te-Chen at no very great distance from Nanking, but there were many other factories in other parts of the country.

Exquisite Work in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.

The climax of Chinese porcelain was reached in the Ching Dynasty during the reigns of K'ang Hsi (1662-1722), Yung Cheng (1723-1735) and Ch'ien Lung (1735-1795), the first and third especially being noted patrons of Art. After the last named there is a marked decline which, perhaps, had already begun to be shown before Ch'ien Lung died. Though it does not follow, of course, that all of the later products are unworthy of the collector's attention. Occasionally one comes across pieces made in the reigns of Chia Ch'ing and Tao Kuang which reach a high standard of beauty: Tao Kuang brings us down to 1850.

It was in 1644 that the Manchus conquered took place but we know practically nothing of the ceramic output of the reign of the first Emperor, Shun Chih. It is probable that the later Ming types persisted and that many of the transitional pieces belong to this time.

K'ang Hsi succeeded to the throne at the early age of nine and it cannot be until some years later that any marked improvement was made in the output from Ching-te-Chen. In fact the Imperial factory was burnt down during a rebellion which lasted from 1673-1681. With the years which follow begins a period which most connoisseurs recognise as the greatest and most brilliant in Chinese ceramic history.

What a Collector Must Remember.

Now what is the ordinary collector likely to be able to acquire belonging to this great period? As was previously mentioned the blue and white is the easiest to find. The blue, which varies from deep pulsating sapphire to a pale silvery tone, is painted on in graded washes within the thinly drawn outline of the design. It is impossible to describe the glaze: it must be seen and learnt. Although it varies somewhat, yet there is a "something" which distinguishes K'ang Hsi glaze from any other. The paste is of fine grain, and it is to be seen on the rim at the foot which is never glazed. It is smooth to the touch and, if a broken surface is revealed, it has an appearance which has been described as "not unlike the surface of a broken-off piece of the 'white' of a hard-boiled egg." Sometimes

(Continued on Page 12.)

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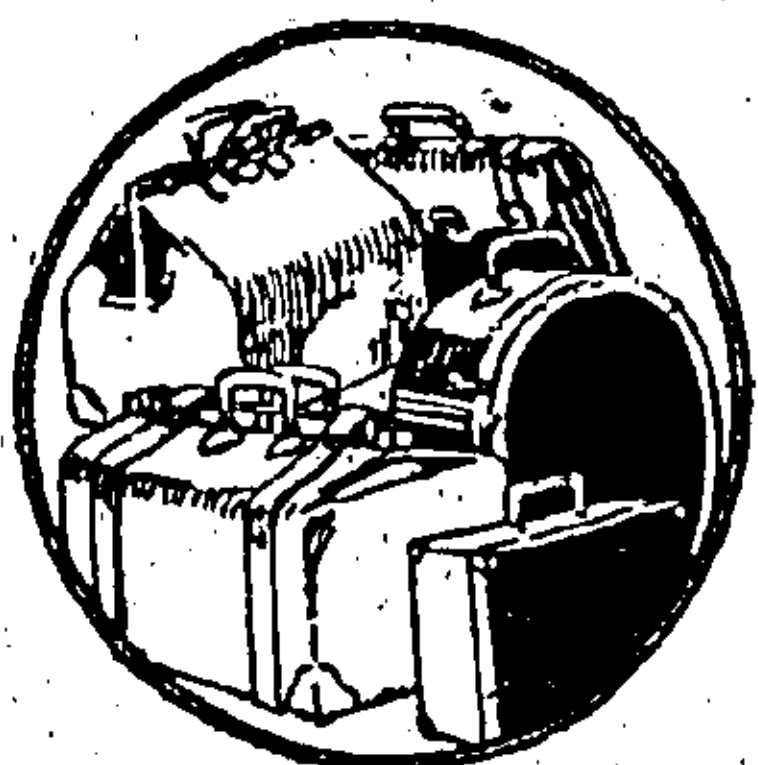
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